

Armenian Historical Sources

of the 5-15th Centuries and Beyond

Selected Works

Translations by Robert Bedrosian are in the public domain. They may be copied and distributed freely.

For additional bibliography, see [Studies of Armenian Literature \(5th-17th Centuries\) at Internet Archive](#).

5th Century

[P'awstos Buzandac'i's *History of the Armenians*](#)

[Ghazar P'arpec'i's *History of the Armenians*](#)

[The Passion of Saint Shushanik](#) *The Martyrdom of Saint Vardan Mamikonean's Daughter A*
New Translation of the Principal and Lesser Texts, by Rev. Fr. Krikor Vardapet Maksoudian.
Download in zipped HTML format from Internet Archive.

[Eusebius of Caesarea's *Chronicle*](#) or *Chronicon*. English translation of the 4th-century Eusebius' Greek original, which has survived fully only in a 5th-century Armenian translation.

[Selections from Agat'angeghos' *History of the Armenians*](#) (multilingual version). Legendary history about Armenia's conversion to Christianity in the early 300s, at Internet Archive.

[History of Vardan and the Armenian War](#), by Eghishe', translated by Robert W. Thomson (London, 1982), at Internet Archive.

Resources for the 4th-5th centuries:

Internet Archive:

[Parthia/Parthians](#)

[Arsacids/Arshakunis](#)

[Sasanians/Sasanids](#)

[The 4th through 6th Centuries](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

[Syriac Sources](#) (various periods and topics), including historical material.

[Syriac Chronicles and Historiography](#) (various periods and topics), at syri.ac

Fordham University:

[Byzantine Sources](#) (various periods and topics), prepared by Paul Halsall.

Wikipedia:

[4th Century](#).

[5th Century](#).

[6th Century](#).

[Trade and Trade Centres in Armenia in the Roman-Parthian and the Byzantine-Sasanid Periods](#), by Hagop Manandian, at Internet Archive.

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Arsacids](#), multiple topics by multiple authors including Cyril Toumanoff, Mary Boyce, and others.

[Sasanian Dynasty](#), by A. Shapur Shahbazi.

[Articles on Armenia](#). Numerous articles by multiple authors.

[Arsacids/Parthians and Sasanian entries](#), from *Selected Topics in Ancient and Medieval Iranian History*, compiled by Robert Bedrosian.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[3rd-4th Centuries](#). Armenia as known to the Romans (1st-3rd centuries), Arsacid (Arshakuni) Armenia in the period 63-298 and later.

[4th-6th Centuries](#). Armenia in the 4th century, the lordly (*naxarar*) system, the organization of the Armenian Church, the first Byzantine expansion into Armenia (387-591), the wars for religious freedom, and the second Byzantine expansion (591-654).

7th Century

[Anonymous *The Primary History of Armenia*](#) or *History of the Ancestors*

[Sebeos' History](#).

7-8th Century

[History of the Aghuans](#), attributed to Movse's Dasxurants'i

8th Century

[Ghewond's History](#).

Resources for the 7th through 9th Centuries:

Internet Archive:

[Byzantine Empire](#)

[Arabs/Caliphate](#)

[Bagratids](#)

[The 7th through Mid-9th Centuries](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

Wikipedia:

[7th Century](#)

[8th Century](#)

[9th Century](#)

[The Commercial Importance of Armenia in the Period of the Arab Caliphate and the Bagratid Kingdom](#), by Hagop Manandian, at Internet Archive.

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Arabs and Iran in the pre-Islamic period](#), by C. E. Bosworth.

[Arab Conquest of Iran](#), by M. Morony.

[Arab settlements in Iran](#), by E. L. Daniel.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[6th-9th Centuries](#). Armenians and the Byzantine empire, the territorial expansion of the great Armenian princely Houses, the anonymous *Ravenna Cosmography*, Armenia according to the 7th-century geographical work called the *Ashxarhats'oyts'*, the Arab domination: the Ummayyad period (654-750), and the Arab domination: the Abbasid period (750-885).

10th Century

[History of the House of the Artsrunik'](#), by T'ovma Artsruni, translated by Robert W. Thomson (Detroit, 1985), at Internet Archive. T'ovma's own portion extends to about 906; others continued it to about 1346.

[Yovhannes Drasxanakertc'i's History of Armenia](#) Translation and Commentary of the *History* of John *Kat'oghikos* by Rev. Fr. Krikor Vardapet Maksoudian.

[John Mamikonean's History of Taron](#)

11th Century

[Aristakes Lastivertc'i's History](#)

Resources for the 9th through 11th Centuries:

Internet Archive:

[Byzantine Empire](#)

[Armeno-Byzantinica](#)

[Saljuqs](#)

[Medieval Armenian Kingdoms and Communities](#)

[The 10th-12th Centuries](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

Wikipedia:

[10th Century](#)

[11th Century](#)

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Saljuqs of Rum](#), by Andrew Peacock.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[9th-11th Centuries](#). Armenia in the early Bagratid period (884-962), in the later Bagratid period (962-1064), the Bagratid kingdoms in Armenia and the Caucasus, the kingdom of Vaspurakan (908-1021), Eastern Armenian kingdoms and principalities (822-1261), the principality and kingdom of Siwnik', and the third Byzantine expansion into Armenia (949-1064).

12th Century

[Dawit' Gandzakets'i's *Penitential*](#), Translation and Commentary by C.J.F. Dowsett.

[The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa](#)

[The Chronicle of Michael the Great, Patriarch of the Syrians](#)

12-13th Century

[The Georgian Chronicle](#)

[Mkhitar Gosh's *Fables*](#) (*belles lettres*). Download in zipped HTML format.

[Mkhitar Gosh's *Colophon*](#) or *The Aghuanian Chronicle*

13th Century

[Kirakos Gandzakets'i's *History of the Armenians*](#)

[Vardan Arewelts'i's *Compilation of History*](#)

Extracts on the Saljuqs, Shaddadids, Zakarids, and Mongols.

Also available, the full translation:

[The Historical Compilation of Vardan Arewelc'i](#), by Robert W. Thomson, from *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 43 (1989), pp. 125-226. Scholarly study and full translation of the *History* of Vardan Arewelts'i (the Easterner) (c. 1200-1271), with invaluable notes, in 103 searchable pdf pages.

[Mxit'ar Ayrivanets'i's *Chronological History, Part 3*](#)

[Step'annos Orbelean's *History of the State of Sisakan*](#)

[Smbat Sparapet's *Chronicle*](#)

[Chronicle](#) Attributed to King Het'um II, 1296.

[Grigor Aknerts'i's *History of the Nation of Archers*](#)

14th Century

[Het'um the Historian's *History of the Tartars* \[The Flower of Histories of the East\]](#)

Resources for the 12th through 14th Centuries:

Internet Archive:

[Turco-Mongolica](#)

[Armenian History and Some Turco-Mongolica at Internet Archive Studies by Speros Vryonis, Jr.](#)

[Cilician Armenia](#)

[Crusades](#)

[The Late 12th Century](#), from the *Chronicle* of Michael Rabo [Michael the Syrian].

[The Trade and Cities of Armenia After the Fall of the Bagratid Kingdom](#), by Hagop Manandian.

Wikipedia:

[12th Century](#)

[13th Century](#)

[14th Century](#)

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Central Asia](#), multiple topics and authors.

[Saljuqs of Rum](#), by Andrew Peacock.

[Danishmend](#), by Tahsin Yazici.

[Khwarazmshahs](#), by C. Edmund Bosworth.

[Jalal al-Din Mengubirdi](#), by C. Edmund Bosworth.

[Mongols](#), by Peter Jackson.

[The Ilkhans](#), multiple authors.

[Alamūt](#), by B. Hourcade.

[Golden Horde](#), by Peter Jackson.

[Chobanids](#), 1335-1357, by Charles Melville and 'Abbās Zaryāb.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[11th-14th Centuries, Eastern Armenia](#). Eastern Armenia under the Saljuqs/Seljuks (11th-12th centuries), under the Georgians (1199-1236), Armenia according to Idrisi's map (1156), and Armenia under the Mongol Ilkhans (1256-1335).

[11th-14th Centuries, Cilician Armenia](#). Cilician Armenia as a Barony (1080-1198/1199) and a Kingdom (1197-1375).

Some of the translations above are available for sale at the excellent [Sophene Books](#), in editions with facing Classical Armenian texts.

If you are interested in learning Classical Armenian (*grabar*), [this link](#) provides suggestions for a completely free Internet education.

Many of the Classical Armenian historical texts, from which the above translations were made, are available as pdf downloads on another page of this website: [Classical Armenian Historical Sources](#).

Armenian Writers of the 5th-13th Centuries

[Armenian Writers](#) and Corresponding *Kat'oghikoi* and Secular Rulers, 5th-13th Centuries, in adjacent scrollable frames. Download in zipped HTML format from Internet Archive.

The material about Armenian authors and their works in the table above is based on a course entitled *History of Armenian Literature* taught by Professor Krikor H. Maksoudian at Columbia University in Autumn-Spring of 1972-1973, and compiled by his student, Robert Bedrosian, from class notes, handouts, and other sources.

For scholarly articles and additional bibliography, see [Studies of Armenian Literature \(5th-17th Centuries\) at Internet Archive](#), on another page of this site.

*

15th Century

[T'ovma Metsobets'i's History of Tamerlane and His Successors](#)

Resources for the 15th Century:

Internet Archive:

[Timurids](#)
[Turco-Mongolica](#)

Wikipedia:

[15th Century](#)

[Timurid Empire](#) (1370-1507)
[Timurids](#), Google search of Wikipedia.

[Jalayirids](#) (1335-1432)
[Qara Qoyunlu](#) (1374-1468)
[Aq Qoyunlu](#) (1378-1503)

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Timurids](#), Google search of Iranica.

[Jalayerids](#), by Peter Jackson.
[Āq Qoyunlū](#), by R. Quiring-Zoche.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[14th-15th Centuries](#). Armenia under Turkmen domination (1378-1502).

16th Century

Resources for the 16th Century:

Internet Archive:

[Ottoman Empire](#)

[Ottoman](#)

[Safavids](#)

[Travellers to Armenia](#), 16th-century accounts.

Wikipedia:

[16th Century](#)

[Ottoman Empire](#) (1299-1922)

[Ottoman Empire](#), Google search of Wikipedia.

[Safavid Dynasty](#) (1501-1736)

[Safavids](#), Google search of Wikipedia.

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Ottomans/Ottoman Empire](#), Google search of Iranica.

[Safavid Dynasty](#), by Rudi Matthee.

[Safavids](#), Google search of Iranica.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[16th-17th Centuries](#). Armenia in the Early Ottoman-Saffavid Period (1478-1590), Armenia in the Middle Ottoman-Safavid Period (1590-1639), the Armenians in Iran, Armenia in the Late Ottoman-Safavid Period (1639-1722), the Armenians of South and Southeast Asia, and the Armenian Diaspora in Eastern Europe.

17th Century

[The Travel Accounts of Simēon of Poland](#) (*Simeon dpri Lehats'woy Ughegrut'iwn*). Introduction and annotated translation by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 2007), in 383 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages. An invaluable early 17th-century description of parts of Europe and the Middle East, made by an Armenian traveller from Poland.

[Arak'el of Tabriz. Book of History](#). Introduction and annotated translation from the critical text by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 2010), in 646 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages. *Encyclopaedia Iranica* has an entry ([Arak'el of Tabrīz](#)) by A. K. Sanjian describing the life and works of the Armenian *vardapet* Ar'ak'el (1590s-1670) and his *History* which covers the period from 1602 to 1662. From the Introduction: "The amount of material in Arak'el's *Book of History* is staggering indeed. His information on the Armenian Church, the establishment of important monastic schools, the list of vardapets, the biographies and martyrdom of various Armenian clerics, the list of the Ottoman and Safavid monarchs, the names and properties of gemstones, the various earthquakes and eclipses, and the other

material discussed separately below, make his work, albeit disjointed, one of the most valuable historical sources in any language on the region in the seventeenth century."

Resources for the 17th Century:

Internet Archive:

[Khojas](#)

[Amiras](#)

[Travellers to Armenia](#), 17th-century accounts.

[Armenians and Russia \(1626-1796\): A Documentary Record](#), annotated translation and commentary, by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, 2001), in 522 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages, with maps.

Wikipedia:

[17th Century](#)

Maps/Texts, Google:

[16th-17th Centuries](#). Armenia in the Early Ottoman-Saffavid Period (1478-1590), Armenia in the Middle Ottoman-Safavid Period (1590-1639), the Armenians in Iran, Armenia in the Late Ottoman-Safavid Period (1639-1722), the Armenians of South and Southeast Asia, and the Armenian Diaspora in Eastern Europe.

18th Century

[A Brief History of the Aghuank' Region](#), a *History of Karabagh and Ganje from 1702-1723*, by Esayi Hasan Jalaleants'. Introduction and annotated translation by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 2009), in 129 bookmarked pages. This precious primary source contains a searchable English translation and the original Armenian text (Jerusalem, 1868).

From the book jacket: "Esayi Hasan Jalaleants' was the *Kat'oghikos*, that is the Supreme Patriarch of the Holy See of Aghuank' (Karabagh-Artsakh and Ganje-Utik') located in the Monastery of Gandzasar. His tenure, from 1702 to 1728, coincided with the temporary decline of the Mother See of Armenia, at Holy Ejmiatsin. Taking advantage of this, Esayi managed to establish close ties with the Russians and Georgians and was instrumental in encouraging Peter the Great to invade Transcaucasia and Iran in 1722.

Esayi's *Brief History of the Aghuank' Region*, that is, the historic Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Utik', concentrates on the Armeno-Georgian efforts against the incursions of Lezgi tribesmen and their hope in the arrival of the Russian army to liberate them from Muslim rule.

The work covers the years 1702 to 1723 and sheds light on a corner of the Persian Safavid Empire during its decline and final collapse. This, the first English translation of Esayi's important primary source, also confirms the large Armenian presence in the Karabagh-Artsakh region long before its conquest by the Russians in the nineteenth century."

[The Chronicle of Petros di Sarkis Gilanentz](#), concerning the *Afghan Invasion of Persia in 1722, the Siege of Isfahan and the Repercussions in Northern Persia, Russia and Turkey*, translated

from the original Armenian and annotated by Caro Owen Minasian, with an Introduction and additional Notes by Laurence Lockhart (Lisbon, 1959). This important historical source appeared as a volume in the *Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Armenian Library* series.

[History of the Wars](#) (1721-1738), by Abraham of Erevan, in 120 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages. This is an annotated translation from the original 18th-century Armenian texts with introductory notes by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 1999).

From the book jacket: "*The History of the Wars*, by Abraham of Erevan ... is one of the few non-Persian primary sources on the history of Persia (Iran) and Transcaucasia in the first half of the eighteenth-century. It details the Afghan and Ottoman invasion and occupation of Persia and Transcaucasia, the efforts of Shah Tahmasp II to restore the Safavid dynasty, the rise of Nader Khan Afsar, Nader's campaigns against the Afghans and the Ottomans, the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Persian State, the coronation of Nader Shah and the establishment of a new dynasty in Persia. Unlike other contemporary sources, which concentrate on the political and socioeconomic conditions of the region, Abraham's history is an uninterrupted account of the wars between the Persians and the Afghans, the Ottomans and the Afghans, and the Persians and the Ottomans. Abraham was an eyewitness to the Ottoman invasion of eastern Armenia and their siege of Erevan. His account mentions individuals, events, and geographical locations not detailed anywhere else.

The work's greatest value, however, is its information on the Armenians. Abraham's detailed account of the Turkish invasion of eastern Armenia is the sole source on the events that occurred in the region from March through September 1724. He provides a vivid physical description of Erevan, its various districts and neighborhoods, its churches and its citizens."

[The Chronicle of Abraham of Crete](#) (*Patmut'iwn of Kat'oghikos Abraham Kretats'i*), annotated translation from the critical text with introduction and commentary by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 1999) in 193 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages.

From the book jacket: "*The Chronicle of Abraham of Crete*, published for the first time in English, is one of the few non-Persian primary sources on the history of Nader Shah. Written by the Supreme Patriarch of the Armenian Church, it describes the events which occurred from April 1734 to November 1736 in northern Iran and Transcaucasia. It details Abraham's sudden and unexpected election to the rank of Supreme Patriarch and his meeting with Nader, during the latter's campaigns in Transcaucasia. Abraham's main contribution, however, is his recounting of the *qurulta'i* (national council) on the Moqan Steppe, where he witnessed the election of Nader as the new Shah of Iran. The *Chronicle* not only paints a vivid picture of the political and socioeconomic conditions of the region, but supplies detailed information on the Persian army and administration not available in Jahangoshy-e Naderi or 'Alam aray-e Naderi. Furthermore, the *Chronicle* is a rich source of Persian, Turkish, and Arabic terms used in the first half of the eighteenth century."

19th Century

[A History of Qarabagh](#): *An Annotated Translation of Mirza Jamal Javanshir Qarabaghi's Tarikh-e Qarabagh*, by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 1994), in 230 bookmarked pdf pages, including the Persian text. The English translation is searchable. This precious document

concerns itself with political and, to some extent, socioeconomic conditions in Qarabagh from the 1740s until 1806.

[Two Chronicles on the History of Karabagh](#), introduction and annotated translation by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, CA, 2004), in 311 searchable pdf pages. "Two local histories, *Tarih-e- Karabagh* and *Karabagh-name*, both written in the first half of the nineteenth century, deal with the Khanate of Karabagh. They are translated here in their entirety, supplemented by material from three other local sources, which detail the history of Karabagh and its surrounding khanates. Together, they provide new information on the history of Persia (Iran), Georgia, eastern Armenia, eastern Transcaucasia (present-day Azerbaijan), the Ottoman Empire, and Russia from 1736 to 1828."

[A History of the Land of Artsakh](#) [Karabagh and Ganje, 1722-1827], by Archbishop S. Hasan-Jalalians (Costa Mesa, CA, 2013), in 283 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages, with maps, illustrations, and tables. This is an English translation of a precious early 19th-century Armenian document, made by Ka'ren V. Ketendjian, with Introduction and scholarly notes by Robert H. Hewsen, and a foreword by George Bournoutian.

From the book jacket: "Sergius (Sargis) Hasan-Jalalians (reigned 1794-1815. d. 1828) was the last Catholicos (supreme patriarch) of the church of Aghuank (Caucasian Albania), the region encompassing in his time the khanates of Karabagh and Ganje (ancient Artsakh and Utik) in Eastern Armenia. Picking up the history of this region essentially from the end of the work of his grandfather's cousin, the catholicos Isaiah (Esai) Hasan-Jalalians (reigned 1702-1728), Sergius carries the story down to the final triumph of the Russians over the Persian Empire just over a century later. Discovered by R. H. Hewsen in a manuscript in the library of the University of Tübingen, Germany in 1984, and here translated into English by K.V. Ketendjian, this is the first rendering of the text into any language. An important primary source for the period under consideration, and for the history of the region with which it is concerned, this work confirms the presence of the Armenians in Karabagh long before their supposed introduction by the Russians after their occupation of the region in the early nineteenth century; it clarifies the distinction between the Armenian leaders Avan and Egan, details the relations between the Armenian *meliks* and the Russian Empire, records the *melik* wars, and reproduces the "Treaty Document" (*Dashnagir*), a kind of Armenian constitution, outlining the terms under which the Armenian leaders of the day opted to be governed under Russian protection."

Resources for the 18th-19th Centuries:

Internet Archive:

[Russian-Armenian Relations 1700-1828](#), by Robert H. Hewsen (Cambridge, MA, 1983), in 47 searchable pdf pages. This concise account is Number 4 in the Occasional Papers series of the *Society for Armenian Studies*.

[Eastern Armenia from the Seventeenth Century to the Russian Annexation](#), by George Bournoutian, from *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II (New York, 1997), Richard G. Hovannisian, editor, Chapter 3, pp. 81-107, and bibliography for the chapter, in 34 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages. Topics: The Formation of Eastern Armenia; Russo-Armenian Relations Prior to the Eighteenth Century; Map 1. Ottoman-Safavid Persian Treaty of 1639; Early Emancipatory Movements; Eastern Armenia in the Early Eighteenth Century; The Reorganization of Eastern Armenia; Eastern Armenia in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century; Map 2. The Meliks of Karabagh during the Persian War of Peter the Great; Socioeconomic Conditions in Eastern Armenia, 1639 to 1800; The Role of the Armenian Church in the Russo-Persian Conflict; Russian Annexation of Eastern Armenia.

[Eastern Armenia on the Eve of the Russian Conquest: The Khanate of Erevan Under the Governorship of Hoseyn Qoli Khan Qajar 1807-1827](#), by George A. Bournoutian, in 264 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages. This is the author's invaluable Ph.D. dissertation (UCLA, 1976).

[Armenians and Russia \(1626-1796\): A Documentary Record](#), annotated translation and commentary, by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, 2001), in 522 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages, with maps.

[Russia and the Armenians of Transcaucasia 1797-1889: A Documentary Record](#), annotated translation and commentary, by George A. Bournoutian (Costa Mesa, 1998), in 586 bookmarked and searchable pdf pages, with maps.

[Qajars](#)

[Travellers to Armenia](#), 18th-century accounts.

[Travellers to Armenia](#), 19th-century accounts.

Wikipedia:

[18th Century](#)

[19th Century](#)

[Qajar Iran](#) (1789-1925)

[Qajars](#), Google search of Wikipedia.

Encyclopaedia Iranica:

[Āgā Moḥammad Khan Qājār](#),

founder of the Qajar dynasty, by John R. Perry.

[Qajars](#), Google search of Iranica.

Maps/Texts, Google:

[18th-19th Centuries](#). The Age of the Meliks (1678-1828), Armenia in the 18th Century, the Khanate of Iravan or Ch'ukhur Sa'd, the Russian Expansion into Caucasia (1774-1878), and Armenia in the Period of Russian and Turkish Reform (1828-1877).

Eastern Asia Minor and the Caucasus in Remote and Classical Antiquity Sources and Studies

[Early Historical Sources Pages:](#)

[Prehistory](#)

[Hittite, Hurrian, Urartian](#)

[Assyrian](#)

[Levantine](#)

[Iranian](#)

[Greek](#)

[Latin](#)

[Some Reference Works](#)